



NEWS RELEASE

Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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For Release: December 1, 2004

*** Consumer Advisory ***

TRA Advises Public of Internet Protocol Relay Service Fraud

Nashville, Tennessee – The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) is advising consumers and businesses to be aware of individuals using Internet-based Relay service to make telephone purchases using fake or stolen credit cards.

Traditional relay service enables persons with hearing and/or speech disabilities to communicate by telephone with individuals who do not have similar disabilities. Internet-based relay service, commonly known as Internet Protocol Relay Service, or IP Relay Service, allows the communications to occur over the Internet.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recently received several inquiries concerning the appropriate use of IP Relay Service, and has issued guidance to consumers, Relay Service providers, and businesses that conduct business transactions via the telephone.

The FCC and the TRA encourage merchants that process transactions via telephone to take steps to ensure that the credit card being used in a transaction is legitimate and that the user is authorized to use the card. Merchants should also be aware that if telephone orders are accepted from the general public, orders from persons with hearing or speech disabilities cannot be refused according to Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Fraudulent use of credit cards is illegal and is thoroughly investigated by the FBI and the Department of Justice. As such, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has advised that businesses who have been victimized by this type of fraud contact the FTC at www.ftc.gov or 1-877-FTC-HELP. Moreover, any fraudulent activity may also be reported to the TRA at 1-800-342-8359 or the FBI.

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